

THE TALON



OPERATION JOINT GUARD, BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

SERVING THE SOLDIERS OF TASK FORCE EAGLE

Keeping the peace



A local child watches as soldiers from 3rd Squad, 1st Platoon, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry, 10th Mountain Division, patrol through the village of Donje Dubrave to assess the attitude of the local people.

Photo by Spc. Tracey L. Hall-Leahy

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Pfc. Wendy R. Tokach
129th MPAD

EAGLE BASE -- Outside the wire at Eagle Base, a squad of soldiers sets off on a patrol. A normal occurrence, but this patrol is a bit different. While providing security, the soldiers are encouraged to interact with the local population. The soldiers stop often to talk to locals.

These external walking patrols are performed often by both 4th Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery and Compa-

ny C, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry, 10th Mountain Division. Their mission is to observe the perimeter for any attempted breaches and gather information from the general public.

At points along the patrols, the column halts, allowing the patrol leader and an interpreter to approach local citizens. Sometimes the people are hesitant but after a few short minutes of conversation, many warm to the soldiers. They tell of upcoming events in

See PEACE Page 12

Strange but true trivia

The Eisenhower interstate system requires that one mile in every five must be straight. These straight sections are usable as airstrips in times of war or other emergencies.

The Boston University Bridge (on Commonwealth Avenue, Boston) is the only place in the world where a boat can sail under a train driving under a car driving under an airplane.

Cats have over one hundred vocal sounds, while dogs only have about ten.

Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.

David Prowse was the guy in the Darth Vader suit in "Star Wars." He spoke all of Vader's lines and didn't know that he was going to be dubbed over by James Earl Jones until he saw the screening of the movie.

Columbia University is the second largest landowner in New York City, after the Catholic Church.

In every episode of Seinfeld there is a Superman somewhere.

There are two credit cards for every person in the United States.

February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.

Montpelier, is the only U.S. state capital without a McDonalds.

The Pentagon, in Arlington, Va., has twice as many bathrooms as is necessary. When it was built in the 1940s, the state of Virginia still had segregation laws requiring separate toilet facilities for blacks and whites.

No word in the English language rhymes with month.

The cruise liner, Queen Elizabeth II, moves only six inches for each gallon of diesel that it burns.

UP FRONT -- GETTING IN STEP, STANDARDS REVIEW II

Let's continue talking about uniform standards and talk about the work and utility uniform, the Battle Dress Uniform.

Before I do that, I need to remind everyone that there are only two categories of BDUs. They are serviceable, and unserviceable. Sorry, no field BDUs; no such thing.

I expect BDUs to be kept in a high state of repair when worn. It is understood that the BDUs will fade, become stained, or get torn by virtue of being in this harsh environment. If you have any questions about what's good and what's not, please ask your unit first sergeant or command sergeant major.

Wear of the authorized protective clothing (coveralls), is highly encouraged. Please take the few extra minutes it takes putting them on and taking them off. If you have a job that requires coveralls and don't have them, see your unit first sergeant or supply sergeant.

And for the rest of us, don't be surprised if you have to dip into your clothing allowance during your time with Task Force Eagle to replace a set or two. We are all scheduled to receive two sets of BDUs upon departure when passing through the



Intermediate Staging Base.

Combat vehicle crewmen, I have not forgotten about you. Ensure you keep your combat vehicle crewman uniforms in serviceable condition also.

BDU shirt sleeves will be worn down when out on mission (mission is implied to be when off base). Commanders may prescribe a specific uniform (sleeves rolled up) for their formations, ceremonies or standard base camp uniform policy.

The Army is a uniformed service where discipline is judged, in part, by the manner in which the individual soldier wears the uniform. This makes a neat appearance important. After all, how should the best Army in the world look?

Command Sgt. Maj. S. L. Kaminski 1st Infantry Division (Forward)

If you have any questions for Kaminski, or have a concern you would like him to address, send it to CSM S. L. Kaminski, Tuzla Main, Operation Joint Guard, APO AE 09789, or email him at csm3bde@pop1-email.5sigcmd.army.mil This is not an opportunity to bypass your chain of command -- this is an opportunity to share concerns that are important to all soldiers.

Sports injuries

When playing sports, sometimes the intensity level exceeds physical ability. This is when many injuries occur.

Stretching during warm-up and cool-down helps soldiers maintain overall flexibility, and this helps to reduce the risk of injury.

The cool-down is just as important because this helps the soldier taper off gradually before stopping the activity completely. Do not stop suddenly after vigorous exercise -- this can be very dangerous.

Another way to reduce the risk of injury is to use the proper equipment for the activity.

Competitive sports have many benefits, and the inherent risks can be reduced with a little common sense. Warm-up and cool-down properly and wear the right gear. **SAFETY FIRST!**

Staff Sgt. Duane T. DeBruler

THE TALON

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Read and pass along -- a Talon is a terrible thing to waste

Radio Tuzla: Live



Mariana Dusevic, standing, and Vildana Halilovic, both interpreters with Task Force Eagle, prepare for the first live broadcast of Military Civilian Relations announcements on Radio Tuzla.

Photo by Sgt. Chris Fletcher

By Sgt. Chris Fletcher
1st Infantry Division PAO

TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina -- Although she has recorded numerous information spots to be aired on Radio Tuzla, the U.S.-contracted Croatian translator for the Military Civil Relations (MCR) office said she was just a little apprehensive about sitting in one of the station's largest recording studios and reading her piece on the air for all to hear.

Mariana Dusevic, of Chicago, Ill., and two other translators, Vildana Halilovic and Zeljko Vucelja, both local nationals, made history when they conducted the first live broadcast ever done by the MCR at Radio Tuzla, April 21.

"I didn't want to make mistakes," Dusevic said. "I was pretty nervous. Since I'm American, my reading skills aren't as good as the others."

Dusevic, who learned Croatian from her parents, read announcements, prepared by MCR, to the local populace "to give people a better idea of why we are here." For example, on the live radio show Dusevic read about the success the Stabilization Force and Implementation Force has had here, and Halilovic and Vucelja each read stories from *The Talon* about different activities taking place at the Task Force Eagle base camps.

Cpl. Keith Wiedemann, MCR operations Noncommissioned officer, said that the U.S. Army negotiated a contract with Radio Tuzla in December 1996 to broadcast information campaigns that MCR put together. Normally, the spots are recorded in the unit's sound booth on Eagle Base, and then delivered to the radio station for airing at a later time.

Wiedemann, 22, of Centreville, Va., explained that doing a live broadcast is just one way for the translators to gain experience.

"Both Vildana and Zeljko fit naturally into a radio personality," Wiedemann explained. "We're doing a live show so they can gain experience as radio personalities in a live format and setting."

For Dusevic, doing live broadcasts are right up her alley. She earned a degree in journalism from Loyola University before volunteering to come over here one month ago. Dusevic is one of the 45 U.S.-contracted translators currently here in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"I needed a break and wanted the experience," she explained. By coming to Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dusevic said she felt she was helping to contribute with the rebuilding of a shattered country.

"I feel I'm doing my part in making people aware," she said, referring to her broadcasts. "It's just my little part of doing what I can do to help out."

There are plans to do future live broadcasts here and at other radio stations, Wiedemann added. He said that he would like to incorporate this type of live programming into Radio Mir at McGovern Base, another station that broadcasts information about SFOR for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, until those plans are finalized, the three translators will continue to record their pieces for airing and practice live broadcasts.

"It'll be easier," Dusevic said. "It was just getting over that first stepping stone. After listening to the tape later, I thought that I did all right."

News briefs

Go postal

Items mailed from in theater must be sent in the correct manner. If an item is sent free mail, it must have the deployed return address of the sender. This should include the sender's name, military grade and complete military address in the upper left corner.

Mail that does not have a complete return address will be treated as "undeliverable matter," and returned to the sender's address, if known. If the sender's address is not known, the matter will be treated as dead mail, and will be forwarded to the U.S. Postal Service mail recovery center.

Additionally, the word free must be entered in the sender's handwriting in the upper right hand corner.

Matter mailed MPS (Military Postal Service) must also have the deployed return address in the upper left corner.

Mail that does not have the correct return address will be treated as "undeliverable matter." If the sender's address is not known, then this matter will be treated as "dead IDS correspondence" and disposed of by regulatory guidelines given to the operational postal activity.

Additionally, the letters MPS must be entered in the sender's handwriting in the upper right hand corner.

Black marketing

Black marketing is the purchasing of AAFES items by any authorized AAFES consumer and the subsequent sale or transfer of these items to anyone not authorized AAFES privileges. Personnel with AAFES privileges are prohibited from engaging in black market activities. The following personnel are authorized AAFES privileges:

SFOR ID card holders (excluding local nationals);

DOD/DA/NAF civilians (excluding local nationals);

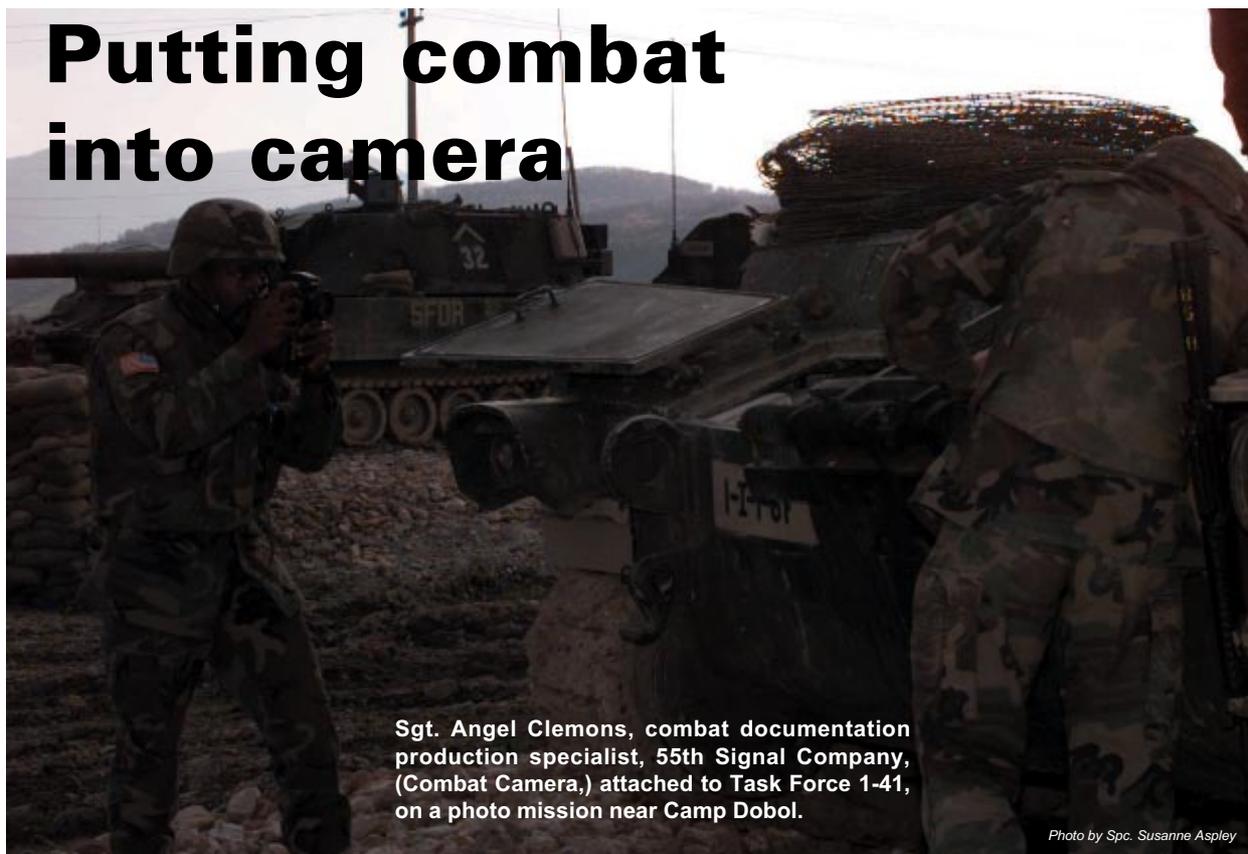
American Red Cross personnel; Brown and Root and BDM employees (excluding local nationals);

U.S. members of the International Police Task Force;

TFE homepage

Check out the latest changes to the Task Force Eagle homepage and letters of encouragement from families and friends around the world at: www.1id.army.mil

Putting combat into camera



Sgt. Angel Clemons, combat documentation production specialist, 55th Signal Company, (Combat Camera,) attached to Task Force 1-41, on a photo mission near Camp Dobol.

Photo by Spc. Susanne Aspley

By Spc. Susanne Aspley
364th MPAD

CAMP DOBOL -- Gathered around the table in a solemn Pentagon briefing room sit more stars than fill the sky on a clear night. They want to know what is happening, and they want to see it, now. In today's immediate information age, visual data is required for leaders to make timely and flawless decisions. Seeing is believing, making the camera a powerful, credible tool.

"We are the eyes and ears of the Army," said Sgt. Angel Clemons, 55th Signal Company, (Combat Camera), attached to Task Force 1-41. "Our mission is to document historical and significant events. We don't know who will see our video or digital images, so they always have to be the best."

After accomplishing a photo mission, whether it be video or still, the combat camera team then writes captions for the photos. The images are immediately sent to Tuzla Main, which is the hub for all the information gathered. Once there, the information is logged. Some images are then transmitted to the Joint Combat Camera Center at the Pentagon in Alexandria, Va.

"They act as our higher command," Clemons said. "They ensure the distribution of our images. From there, they are dispersed to other federal agencies and military services. The Joint Chiefs of Staff can use our images to make

an impact regarding command decisions."

"We record everything for the Army. On our assignments, we are an asset that supports each element of the task force. We are used as a decision-making tool for the task force commander," said Clemons, 25, from Rockland County, N.Y. Spc. Dwight Chaney, 25, of Danville, Va., makes up the other half of the Combat Camera crew at Camp Dobol. The 55th Sig. Co., based at Fort Meade, Md., is the only combat camera unit in the Army.

"There are several combat camera missions currently going on both in and out of the U.S.," Clemons said. "Although we are stationed at Fort Meade, we are deployed nine months out of the year. There is a

great demand for us."

The soldiers perform rotations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and may continue until Operation Joint Guard is over. There are also teams at McGovern Base and Tuzla Main.

"Many times when we go out on a mission, we end up in places other people can't go. We document what is happening in country and what the Army is doing," Clemons said. "We go anywhere the theater commander decides coverage is necessary."

Footage of SFOR is at first restricted but once it is cleared by the Pentagon, it is released for public use and websites.

The photographers do not get instant gratification for their hard work. Maybe six months later they find out if their photos are used or not. High in the chain of command, someone might request footage from a certain time block of an exercise or mission. The information manager at the Pentagon will find it.

"It's a challenge because we don't shoot everyday," Clemons said. "But when we do, it's the real thing, so we always have to be ready at any time, day or night."

"I enjoy the work because it is something I love to do. The camera is an extension of my eye and it puts me in places the average eye might not be able to see. With the zoom lens, I can get there, and with a different angle. This is how I tell the story."

Photo websites

Acquire combat camera photos at these websites:

www.1id.army.mil
Task Force Eagle web page

www.dtic.mil/defenseink/photos
Defense photos web page

www.dodmedia.osd.mil/dvic/cdroms.htm
cd-roms department of defense cd-rom images

dodimagery.afis.osd.mil/
JCCC web site (must acquire account)

Fixing bridges together

Spc. Paul Hougdahl
129th MPAD

CAMP COLT -- A late storm has laid several inches of heavy, wet snow on northern Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the snow continues to fall. Made slippery by the new snow is a bridge with a center section that is a mass of twisted steel and crumbling concrete from a bomb blast. Underneath the bridge streams an irrigation ditch, flowing muddy brown water from spring run-off. Spanning the ditch and covering the damaged bridge is a Bailey bridge -- also a danger to those who cross it.

This is the scene that the members of 2nd Platoon, Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion saw when they came to repair the dangerous bridge. The weather brought conditions which seem to be the norm for an engineer job such as this one, conditions which they almost seem to relish.

"This is typical engineer weather. It seems like every time we go out to do something, this kind of weather shows up," said Sgt. 1st Class Kraig Haas, platoon leader, 2nd Plt., Co. B, 82nd Eng. Bn. "It almost makes it fun, but we do wish it was sunny."

Sometime during the war, the center part of the original bridge was blown away and in 1992, the Serbian army replaced the bridge with a Bailey bridge.

The bridge is an important link for commercial vehicles delivering supplies between the large towns of Gradacac and Modricka, as well as for Stabilization Force vehicles traveling between the U.S. sector and the NORDPOL Brigade. Without the bridge, vehicles would have to use a bypass that would add 30 kilometers to the trip.

Because of the importance of the bridge, SFOR officials determined repairs were needed soon. They met with Serbian military leaders and decided to work together to fix the bridge using parts, materials and labor from both sides.

The Bailey bridge was not assembled correctly and because of a lack of maintenance, had become twisted and weak. It became a serious safety hazard to large SFOR vehicles and for the heavy delivery trucks that use the bridge. It was also a hazard to local citizens who walk, bike and drive over the bridge. The wood that serves as the deck had seriously deteriorated.

This type of Bailey bridge is designed to carry a load up to 50 tons, but this particular bridge had deteriorated to the point where it would only handle about 16 tons and it was getting weaker.

"There was a potential for a really bad accident because vehicles were using the bridge that shouldn't have, vehicles that were too heavy for the condition it was in," said Capt. Kevin Earn, commander of Co. B, 82nd Eng. Bn., operating out of McGovern Base and Camp Colt. "Because certain parts weren't installed and there was no maintenance on the bridge, it was allowed to move and buckle, which caused more parts to fail."

"The Serbian soldiers didn't know much about the bridge and it was not put in correctly -- the bridge became crooked," said Lt. R. Alexander, a Republic of Srbska engineer officer who assisted in the repair. "Both sides worked here to put some elements that were not here on the bridge, that's why it was not OK. All kinds of vehicles use this bridge. Now it's a very good bridge."

The soldiers were glad to use their skills on this project. Since arriving in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the majority of their time has



Cpl. Aaron Johnson a combat engineer with Company B, 82nd Engineer Battalion, unloads a plank to use to repair the deck of a Bailey bridge.

Photo by Spc. Paul Hougdahl

been spent supervising factions as they clear mines and working on force protection projects around Camp Colt.

"It's great, it takes away from the boredom of the base camp. It gets the soldiers out and actually doing engineering projects," said Haas. "We don't get a lot of opportunity to work with bridges. It gives them a good experience to come out here and gets hands-on experience and learn different ways, not only to build them, but how to fix them and learn different techniques."

Within two days, the 82nd Eng. Bn., along with help from several Republic of Srbska soldiers, straightened the bridge and put on the sway-braces and top brackets which keep the bridge straight and strong. With the bridge repaired to original strength and with a little maintenance it will now last eight to 10 years.



From top left, clockwise, A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter picks up a HMMWV as part of a sling-load exercise conducted by Company C, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry at Camp Bedrock on April 24.... Staff Sgt. David Gilbreth, signals the helicopter as it hovers over the HMMWV in part of a sling-load exercise... The helicopter picks up a HMMWV... Soldiers dispel the static charge and hook the HMMWV to the helicopter... *Background*, The helicopter flies the HMMWV around Camp Bedrock.

Flying HMMWVs

Story and Photos by Spc. Gary Bailey
129th MPAD

CAMP BEDROCK – The day was windy enough to toss scraps of paper around the camp with reckless abandon, but not quite strong enough to float a HMMWV. However, flying HMMWVs are exactly what was seen here on April 24. The vehicles were attached to a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter as part of a sling-load exercise conducted by Company C, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry.

The unit, from Ft. Drum, N.Y., currently stationed at Eagle Base, performed the exercise with the help of the 4th Aviation Brigade's helicopters and pilots. The Black Hawk lowered itself and hovered over the HMMWV while Co. C soldiers hooked it up with the sling-load equipment.

Before connecting the helicopter and HMMWV together, soldiers first dispelled the static electricity that may have been accumulated by the helicopter while flying. The "static probe" guy put a rod in the ground and ran a wire from it to the helicopter. He hooked it to the helicopter which grounded it, making it safe for soldiers to touch.

"If the static electricity is not released, it goes to the soldier," said Staff Sgt. Leonard Covington, 2nd Squad leader and noncommissioned officer in charge of the exercise.

Once the energy was safely discharged, the helicopter was hooked to its load by the "hook up" soldier.

Next, the "signal soldier" directed the aircraft directly over the load and ensured the helicopter was able to safely raise the load.

The class on sling loading is part of the air assault course.

"Everyone here has been to air assault school and is air assault qualified," Covington said.

The unit also went through a refresher course a week before the exercise to prepare for the event.

This exercise was used to ensure unit readiness in case a situation occurs in which the unit would need to conduct a real sling-load operation, said 2nd Lt. Matthew Erlacher, 2nd Platoon leader, Co. C, 2nd Bn., 14th Inf.

"Sling-load operations are used when we need to deliver goods rapidly to places that are difficult or hard to get to by ground means, either with attack or resupply roles," he said.

Erlacher said that light infantry and military police units are the two types of units that most often use sling-load operations.

"Track vehicles are too heavy for this procedure," he said.

The unit also uses cargo nets to sling load supplies, Erlacher said.

After a successful exercise, the unit is prepared to sling load anything they need to get to a remote location quickly — people, supplies and even HMMWVs.



McGovern mecca

By Spc. David Boe

364th MPAD

MCGOVERN BASE -- It's built on the site of a former pig farm. Most of its residents live in tents. Its population is no larger than the typical American countryside hamlet. A single dirt road provides the only access to the place, which sits in the middle of mine-infested fields near a devastated Bosnian town.

Not exactly what one would call a mecca, but that is what McGovern Base is — a mecca for VIPs.

It seems that almost every week McGovern attracts very important people from around the world, from U.N. representatives to NATO commanders, to U.S. congressmen and cabinet members. It was built and they have come. But why? What induces high-ranking men and women to leave their plush offices and committee rooms of mahogany desks and marble floors to visit a camp where flushing toilets are a luxury?

"They like to come and see the troops and see what kind of activities they are doing," said Command Sgt. Maj. Jessie Legette, top enlisted soldier for Task Force 1-77 at McGovern Base.

Of course, this doesn't mean McGovern holds a monopoly on VIP visits. Many of the other U.S. camps have seen their fair share of important visitors since December, 1995. However, the role of McGovern is still critical, said Legette. Sitting astride one of the main routes leading into the strategic city of Brcko, McGovern is ideally located to provide security and peace enforcement in one of the more tense sectors of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Its importance was validated earlier last year when, after the number of base camps was slashed as part of restructuring, McGovern was one of only nine remaining in the U.S. sector.

"McGovern is now the only camp located in the north that is still

inside the Zone of Separation, and with the city of Brcko so near, it plays a key role," said Legette. "They (VIPs) usually concentrate on the areas where the task force headquarters are located and McGovern Base is the headquarters of Task Force 1-77."

As the task force's command sergeant major, Legette has a direct hand in making sure VIP visits to McGovern are a success. "When VIPs come here I want them to see how our soldiers perform, and let them see that the mission is being performed well," he said. "I would like the American people to know what an outstanding job these soldiers are doing on this mission."

A simple goal, but not easy. There are many details to consider when VIPs come knocking on McGovern's door -- everything from security, transportation, food, camp tours and troop visits.

"It's very challenging -- a lot of work," said Sgt. 1st Class Daniel P. Towell, protocol noncommissioned officer for McGovern Base. "Each visit can take up from just an hour and a half to all week."

Towell's job is to coordinate all of the details that go into a VIP visit and make sure they leave McGovern satisfied. "The impression you want to give them is that we're over here for a reason," he said. "We take them around the camp and basically explain to them what we're doing here and how we help the people of Bosnia."

Towell said the best way for VIPs to learn about the U.S. mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina is visiting camps such as McGovern.

"Compared to just looking at a map, you can see what's going on," said Towell. "At least here they can see what we're accomplishing. They can see the results."

Or taste the results, said Staff Sgt. Johnny Burks, food operations sergeant for the McGovern Base dining facility. Burks, his two civilian counterparts and the staff at the dining facility have already catered three VIP visits since Task Force 1-77 took over

McGovern Base in early April, as well as several commitments for Joint Military Commission meetings. Keeping all the VIPs, as well as over 900 soldiers happily fed, keeps Burks and his staff busy, but he enjoys it.

"I feel honored serving the VIPs that come through here," said Burks. "I want them to get the same treatment that the soldiers get every day. Here, everybody is a VIP."

Burks' latest VIP customer was U.S. Rep. Sonny Bono, who visited McGovern Base on April 20. In addition to the dining facility, Bono toured the living quarters and work areas of the camp, greeting and talking with as many soldiers as he could meet.

"I purposefully joined the national defense committee so I could go out and meet these soldiers in the field," said Bono. "It's an honor to come here."

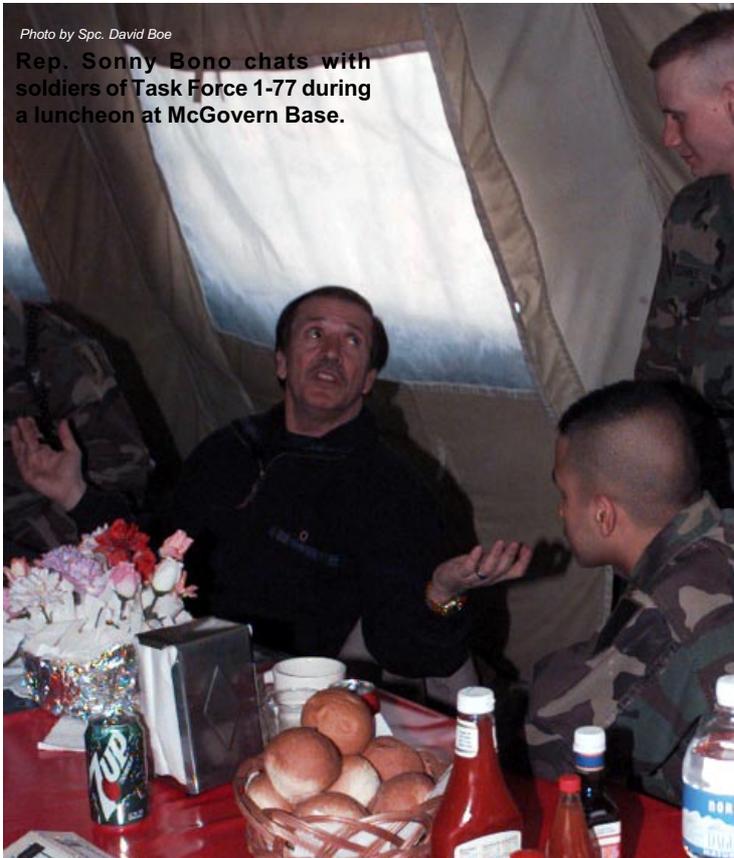
One of the soldiers Bono visited with was Spc. Jeanne M. Boatwright, 22, an intelligence analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-77th Armor. Boatwright, who had never met a U.S. congressman, said she was impressed that someone of Bono's stature would take the time to visit troops like herself in the middle of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"It makes me feel as if my own opinion is important," said Boatwright, a native of Port St. Lucy, Fla. "They are worrying about my welfare instead of just sitting a thousand miles away in Washington, D.C., not really concerned with what's going on in my life. They're respecting my opinion."

As for Bono himself, the entertainer-turned-congressman said it was the soldiers he met at McGovern who are the real VIPs. "What I see of the troops here, I have nothing but pride," he said. "Congress appreciates them being here, and I appreciate them being here."

Photo by Spc. David Boe

Rep. Sonny Bono chats with soldiers of Task Force 1-77 during a luncheon at McGovern Base.



Close air support



Sgt. Chris Bennett, a member of Detachment 1, 1st of the 246th Field Artillery Brigade, uses a ground vehicle laser designator to help an Apache helicopter sight a target during a close air support exercise held recently near Dobo.

Photo by Sgt. Steven Collins

By Sgt. Steven Collins
129th MPAD

DOBOJ -- The A-10 Thunderbolt jet drops a laser-guided bomb on the unsuspecting tank, which has pinned down a small squad of American infantryman near Dobo. Thanks to the help of a Danish Tactical Air Control Party (TACP), the bomb hits the target, saving the soldiers.

This imaginary scene was one of many played out by European and American soldiers during a close air support exercise held recently near the NORDPOL Brigade headquarters in Dobo. The exercise involved TACPs from the Norwegian and Danish Battalions, U.S. Air Force jets from Aviano Air Base in Italy and U.S. Army Apache helicopters and personnel.

"This is a good opportunity for us to show what we can do," said Maj. Holger Hogsberg, the air liaison officer, Danish Battalion, NORDPOL Brigade. "We try to do as much as possible during each one of

these training exercises."

Close air support involves the cooperation of ground units and airborne military assets, such as jet fighters and helicopters. TACPs, a crew of three to five soldiers, are placed near potential targets, usually deployed with other ground units in forward operations. The TACPs are in radio contact with pilots and direct them to ground targets, which can range from moving convoys to buildings or camps.

The pilots rely on the intelligence provided by the TACPs, who from the ground, offer a unique perspective. Depending on the type of threat, pilots will keep their jets from 5,000 to 20,000 feet in the air. Without the TACPs, pilots sometimes have a hard time picking out a single tank or building in an area populated by both enemy and friendly troops.

"There are several ways to get planes to see the targets," said Capt. Robert D. Olesen, a member of the Danish army artil-

lery and commander of a TACP. "We are usually in constant radio contact with the pilots and help them find the targets on the ground."

Pilots circle the area, training themselves to find targets in the rough terrain found in the part of Bosnia-Herzegovina patrolled by the NORDPOL

Brigade. Once pilots find a "target," they make mock bombing runs, sometimes dropping flares on the targets.

"These exercises give each one of the different armies a chance to work together and train on important CAS (close air support) techniques," said Hogsberg. "The exercises allow us to test our communications, to make sure everything works."

"I talk directly to the pilot and try to describe things to him. We go from big to small," said Olesen.

By describing "from big to small," Olesen tries to describe large landmarks. Once pilots see the large landmarks, Olesen points out smaller ones. For example, at the exercise Olesen described a bridge and told the pilot to follow the road north. Once the pilot affirmed he saw the road, Olesen started describing other landmarks, such as ridges, buildings or side roads. Eventually, the pilot will find the target.

The close air support exercises are regular events for the TACPs of the NORDPOL Brigade. Since close air support also includes the coordination and use of artillery assets, members of the Virginia National Guard take part in the training. At a recent exercise, a fire support team from Detachment 1, 1st of the 246th Field Artillery helped artillery and Apache helicopters home in on targets.

2nd Lt. Scott Romero, a fire support team leader and team member, Sgt. Chris Bennett of Goochland, Va., used a ground vehicle laser designator to help an Apache pilot find targets. The team also called in fire missions to check the response from artillery units at Camp Caisson and Camp Valhalla.

"We try to incorporate as much into these training exercises as we can," said Hogsberg. "We get as much practice as possible and it allows the soldiers and pilots to work together."

Capt. Robert D. Olesen and a crew member, Danish Battalion, NORDPOL Brigade, locate the A-10 Thunderbolt they are guiding into the target area.



Photo by Sgt. Steven Collins

Singing in the rain

By Spc. David Boe
364th MPAD

MCGOVERN BASE -- "I'm singing in the rain, Just singing in the rain, What a glorious feeling, I'm happy again."

Gene Kelly sang this song while dancing exuberantly in a drenching downpour in the classic MGM musical, *"Singing in the Rain."* That was in Hollywood. What if Kelly had sung the famous song during Bosnian weather?

"He'd probably run inside right away," said Sgt. Mario J. Ramos, Jr., of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry. "He'd say, 'Oh, why did I write this song?'" Ramos isn't alone in his sentiments concerning the weather in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Many SFOR soldiers find the weather here unpredictable, frustrating and downright crazy.

"I think it (is bad!)" said Pfc. Deshawn O. Hill, a mechanic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force 1-77. "I've never seen anything like it. I'm from Georgia, so I'm not used to weather like this."

"It's worse than Germany," said Spc. Jomeca D. White, HHC, TF 1-77. "In the morning it's cold, then around nine o'clock it starts getting warm, then around 10 or 12 it starts raining, and at four or five it starts to snow."

"This weather is for the birds," said Spc. Kenneth J. Fairchild, HHC, TF 1-77.

Frustrating or not, the weather in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a major concern for soldiers -- from private to general. Knowing what each day will bring -- sunshine, rain, snow, hail or all four -- can mean success or failure of a mission. Enter Airman 1st Class Petina L. Allen, 4100 Weather Squadron (P). It's up to her to make sure soldiers are prepared for whatever Mother Nature throws at them.

"Everyone wants to know what the weather is going to be like," said Allen, 23, one of two Air Force weather observers with TF 1-77 at McGovern Base. "The commander always likes to know what it's like for his mission, because he's traveling a lot."

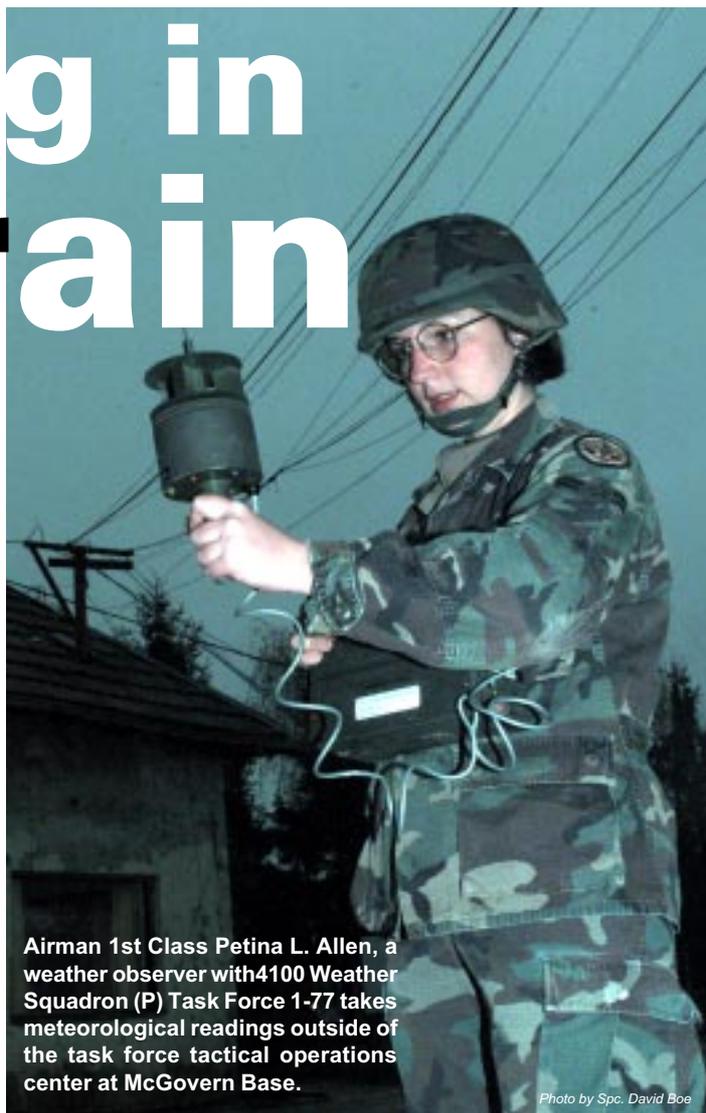
Because of this, Allen finds herself a lot of times in the rain -- not dancing, but taking weather readings. Once an hour during her 12-hour shift she goes outside from the tactical operations center and makes meteorological observations, checking such measurements as temperature, barometric pressure, dew point, wind speed and direction, and visibility. Whatever results she obtains are sent down to the forecast center in Tuzla.

"From there they make forecasts every six hours," she said. "But based on their own observations they can amend, adjust, or update their forecasts."

Allen then conducts morning weather reports to the task force leadership, based on the forecasts she receives back from Tuzla. Allen said the forecasts are usually correct, but that one can't fully predict the whims of the weather.

"You can try to be as scientific as you can, but the weather is still going to be 50-50," she said. "The weather can have a mind of its own." The weather in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a case in point.

"I've talked to some of the locals here and asked them about the snow we've had the past couple of days, and if it's typical for this time of the year, and they said absolutely not," said Allen. "So, the



Airman 1st Class Petina L. Allen, a weather observer with 4100 Weather Squadron (P) Task Force 1-77 takes meteorological readings outside of the task force tactical operations center at McGovern Base.

Photo by Spc. David Boe

Balkan weather is kind of, well, it's different. We've had all four seasons in one day." Allen said the unpredictability of the weather doesn't stop people from ribbing her about an occasional erroneous forecast, or acting like she has something to do with the weather.

"I get that everyday," she said. "I get dogged about the bad weather, but I do get praised if the weather is good."

Known by McGovern residents as the "weather lady," Allen takes her job seriously, but still likes to have some fun doing it. Every morning, at the task force battle update brief, she gives her weather report using props depicting a sun with sunglasses and clouds of different temperament.

"They're visual aids used for fun," she said. "They add excitement to the 'BUB.'"

Allen said her reports can influence how day-to-day activities or missions will be conducted by the task force, from something as simple as dressing for guard duty to more complicated tasks like flight operations. While bad weather may put a damper on military operations, Allen said there is at least one thing good about it.

"Bad weather makes you appreciate the good weather more."

For herself Allen likes all weather - good or bad. She said observing the weather is an interesting and challenging job.

"I like it - keeping up with it, the physics of it, the unknown," she said. Does she compare herself to Gene Kelly's rain-loving character in *'Singing in the Rain'*? "Actually, I haven't seen the movie," admits Allen. "I haven't even seen *'Twister'*!"

Eager to learn

By Staff Sgt. Tim Erhardt
129th MPAD

CAMP SAVA NORTH — Spc. Tamara J. Caple finishes a long shift at the post office. She has been on her feet for hours. She's hungry, she needs a shower and she's just plain tired. She thinks about going to the tent for a nap before doing anything else. Then she remembers. It's Wednesday. Time to go to class.

Caple, 55th Postal Company, and eight other soldiers are promptly seated before Mary Jones, the instructor, arrives.

Why go to school after working all day? "These students want to eventually get a college degree," said Jones. "The courses we have here start them on their way."

Military service gives soldiers access to a college education, access they may otherwise not have. "Attending class while on deployment gives soldiers a great opportunity," said Jones. "They get a great deal with 75 percent of the tuition paid for by the U.S. government." Jones said that soldiers may be able to take classes free if they qualify for the Pell Grant.

"I'm trying to take care of the requirements for my two-year degree. Classes like these are the first step," said Staff Sgt. Shawn M. Kramer, Company A, 32nd Signal Battalion section sergeant. Besides working toward a degree, soldiers get one promotion point for every college credit. Kramer has been a member

of the U.S. Army for six years. He is enrolled in the speech class.

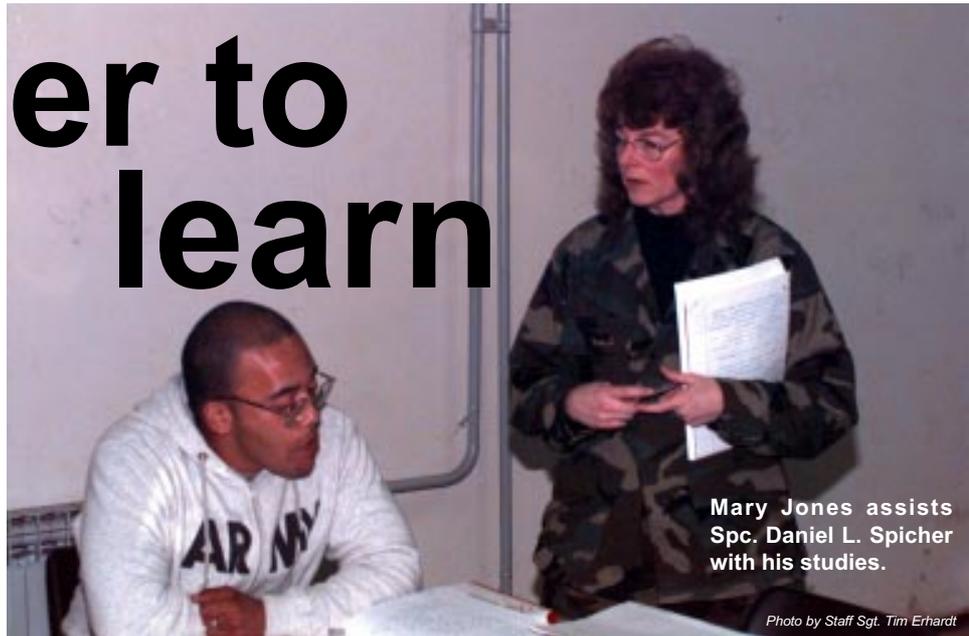
"I've already completed courses in English, social sciences, and physics, all during off-time duty," said Kramer. "These col-

ny (Air Ambulance) petroleum supply specialist, is enrolled in both the English and speech courses. These are the first college level courses he has ever taken. Even after a long day of fueling Black Hawks, Spicher feels attending class at Slavonski Brod is just what he needs.

"After duty here I can concentrate because there are few distractions," he said.

Jones arrived at Slavonski Brod April 13. "The command here has been wonderful," said Jones. "They asked if I need anything and if I'm comfortable. People here are exceptionally helpful and friendly."

Jones said that her students at Slavonski Brod are a determined group. Even a bomb reaction drill the first night of speech class only temporarily distracted them. "I admire them," said Jones. "They come in after working all day and are still eager to learn."



Mary Jones assists Spc. Daniel L. Spicher with his studies.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Tim Erhardt

"Attending class while on deployment gives soldiers a great opportunity. They get a great deal with 75 percent of the tuition paid for by the U.S. government."

— Mary Jones

lege credits have definitely helped me to get promoted."

Getting credit toward a degree and promotion aren't the only reasons students are attending classes at Slavonski Brod. Spc. Daniel L. Spicher, 498th Medical Compa-

Turtles in the box

featuring Muddy and Dusty

By Capt. Peter J. Buotte





Sgt. Paul C. Walker, patrol leader, 4th Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery, and an interpreter speak with some local men about upcoming events.

Photo by Pfc. Wendy R. Tokach

Peace

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the Bosnian community that may be of interest to the Stabilization Force troops.

"We also ask them their feelings about the SFOR troops and about any events they have coming up," said Sgt. Paul C. Walker, patrol leader, 4th Bn., 3rd ADA.

Most events involve upcoming holidays or weddings, where it is not uncommon for the celebrants to shoot undisciplined shots into the air during the event. By gathering this information ahead of time, the patrol keeps SFOR troops informed of possible gunfire.

Although patrols in general can become repetitive and boring, these are different.

"On the internal patrols, it's hard not to become complacent, and when that happens there is a possibility that someone

could become hurt," said Pvt. Dan P. Kozlowski, 4th Bn., 3rd ADA. "It's easy to let your guard down when you do the same thing over and over. The external patrols are an opportunity to get out and see the public.

"I feel we are doing our part for our country and being a soldier. When we are out there interacting with the public, you see that the SFOR troops really are keeping the peace."

— Pfc. Clarence M. Galloway

"If you stay inside of Tuzla Main you'll never see the public, but when you get out there and see the people and you realize there is a reason you are here."

"These routes are a bit better. The external patrol is a little better because most of

the internal (patrols) are between ankle and knee deep in mud," Walker said. "The routes change but the mission really doesn't."

While the patrol routes follow main roads surrounding Eagle Base, the routes taken by soldiers change often. Even with the frequent stops and the slower pace to observe the surrounding community, the patrol takes only a few hours. The patrols get much accomplished by scanning the area, speaking with the locals and gathering useful information.

"Sometimes we get them to start talking and they just keep going on and on," Walker said. "This man was excited to see us and told us about everything we might want to be aware of. He also told us how happy he was that we are here."

"I feel like we are doing our part for our country and being a soldier," said Pfc. Clarence M. Galloway 4th Bn., 3rd ADA. "When we are out there interacting with the public you see that the SFOR troops really are keeping the peace."